

CHAPTER 12

DRIVING TEST

This chapter covers the performance road test. You are required to drive over a designated test route that has a variety of traffic situations. You will be evaluated on your ability to safely negotiate all the maneuvers along the designed route. You must drive in a safe and responsible manner at all times during the test.

12-1. INSTRUCTIONS. Before you begin the road test, an examiner will brief you on the entire route. He will explain the maneuvers you will be required to execute and the scoring standards. You will be given additional directions and instructions as you proceed through the route.

12-2. SCORING THE TEST. The examiner will be scoring you on specific driving maneuvers and also your general driving behavior. Directions and instructions will be given to you by the examiner in sufficient time for you to execute a driving maneuver. You will not be asked to drive in an unsafe manner.

If your test route does not have certain traffic situations, you maybe asked to simulate a traffic situation. Explain to the examiner what you are doing (or would be doing) if you were in that traffic situation.

The examiner will be making various marks on the road test form. This does not necessarily mean you have done anything wrong. It is in your best interest to concentrate on driving. The examiner will explain the test results to you at the conclusion of the road test.

12-3. DRIVING THE TEST ROUTE. Follow the checklist below when practicing the road test.

	GO	NO GO
1. When preparing to make a turn--		
a. Check traffic in all directions.		
b. Use turn signals and safely get into the lane needed for the turn.		
2. When approaching a turn--		
a. Use turn signals to warn others of your turn.		
b. Slow down smoothly, change gears as needed to keep power. Do not coast. Unsafe coasting occurs when your vehicle is out of gear (clutch depressed or gearshift in neutral) for more than the vehicle length.		
3. If you must stop before making a turn--		
a. Come to a smooth stop without skidding.		
b. Stop behind the stop line, crosswalk, or stop sign.		

	GO	NO GO
c. If stopping behind another vehicle, stop when you can see the rear tires on the vehicle ahead of you (safe gap).		
d. Do not let your vehicle roll.		
e. Keep the front wheels aimed straight ahead.		
4. When you are ready to negotiate a turn--		
a. Check traffic in all directions.		
b. Keep both hands on the steering wheel during the turn.		
c. Do not change gears during the turn.		
d. Check mirrors. Make sure the vehicle does not hit anything on the inside of the turn.		
e. Check that vehicle does not move into oncoming traffic.		
f. Check that vehicle finishes in correct lane.		
5. After you have completed a turn--		
a. Make sure turn signal is off.		
b. Get up to speed of traffic, use turn signal, and move into right-most lane when safe to do so (if not already there).		
6. When you approach an intersection--		
a. Check traffic in all directions.		
b. Decelerate gently.		
c. Brake smoothly and, if necessary, change gears.		
d. If necessary, come to a complete stop (no coasting) behind any stop signs, signals, sidewalks, or stop lines. Maintain a safe gap behind the vehicle in front of you.		
e. Your vehicle must not roll forward or backward.		
7. When driving through an intersection--		
a. Check traffic in all directions.		
b. Decelerate and yield to pedestrians and traffic in the intersection.		
c. Do not change lanes or shift gears while proceeding through the intersection.		
d. Keep your hands on the wheel.		
8. When you have gone through the intersection--		
a. Continue checking traffic.		
b. Accelerate smoothly and change gears as necessary.		
9. During the urban/rural straight portion of a test you must make regular traffic checks and maintain a safe following distance. Your vehicle should be centered in the proper lane (right-most lane) and you should keep up with the flow of traffic but not exceed the posted speed limit.		

	GO	NO GO
10. During the urban/rural portion you will be asked to change lanes to the left, and then back to the right. You should make the necessary traffic checks first, then use proper signals and smoothly change lanes when it is safe to do so.		
11. Actions required before you enter an expressway--		
a. Check traffic.		
b. Use proper signals.		
c. Merge smoothly into the proper lane of traffic.		
12. Actions required after you enter an expressway--		
a. Maintain proper lane positioning, spacing, and speed.		
b. Continue to check traffic in all directions.		
13. Actions required when instructed to change lanes--		
a. Make necessary traffic checks.		
b. Use proper signals.		
c. Change lanes smoothly when it is safe to do so.		
14. Actions required when exiting an expressway--		
a. Make necessary traffic checks.		
b. Use proper signals.		
c. Decelerate smoothly in the exit lane.		
d. Once on a ramp, continue to decelerate within the lane markings, and maintain adequate spacing between your vehicle and other vehicles.		
15. For stopping and starting maneuvers--		
a. Pull your vehicle to the side of the road.		
b. Stop as if you were going to exit and check your vehicle and its load.		
c. Check traffic in all directions and move to the right-most lane or shoulder of the road.		
16. Actions required when preparing to stop--		
a. Check traffic.		
b. Activate your right turn signal.		
c. Decelerate and brake smoothly, and downshift if necessary.		
d. Bring your vehicle to a stop without coasting.		
17. Actions required after you have stopped--		
a. Ensure vehicle is parallel to the curb or shoulder of the road and safely out of the traffic flow.		
b. Ensure vehicle is not blocking driveways, fire hydrants, intersections, signs, and so on.		
c. Cancel your turn signal.		

	GO	NO GO
d. Activate 4-way emergency flashers.		
e. Apply the parking brake.		
f. Move the gear shift to neutral or park.		
g. Remove your feet from the brake and if equipped, from the clutch pedal.		
18. Actions required when you resume--		
a. Check mirrors and traffic in all directions.		
b. Turn off 4-way emergency flashers.		
c. Activate the left turn signal.		
d. When traffic permits, release the parking brake and pull straight ahead.		
e. Do not turn the wheel before your vehicle moves.		
f. Check traffic from all directions, especially to the left.		
g. Steer and accelerate smoothly into the proper lane when safe to do so.		
h. Once your vehicle is back into the flow of traffic, cancel left turn signal.		
19. Actions to be taken when you approach a curve--		
a. Check traffic in all directions.		
b. Before entering the curve, reduce speed so further braking or shifting is not required.		
c. Keep vehicle in the lane.		
d. Continue checking traffic in all directions.		
20. Actions required when you approach an upgrade--		
a. Select the proper gear to maintain speed and not lug the engine.		
b. Check traffic in all directions and move to the right-most or curb lane.		
c. If legal to do so, use 4-way emergency flashers if travelling too slow for the flow of traffic.		
21. Actions required before you start down a grade:		
a. Downshift as needed to help control engine speed. Test brakes by gently applying the foot brake to ensure they work properly. As vehicle moves down the grade, continue checking traffic in all directions, stay in the right-most or curb lane, and if legal to do so, use 4-way emergency flashers if moving too slow for traffic. Increase following distance and observe the downhill braking procedures below:		
- Select a safe speed that is not too fast for the weight of the vehicle, length and steepness of the grade, weather, and road conditions.		
- Once a safe speed is reached, apply the brake hard enough to feel a definite slowdown.		

	GO	NO GO
- When speed has been reduced to 5 mph below the safe speed, release the brakes. (This application should last for about three seconds.)		
- Once speed has increased to the safe speed, repeat the procedures above.		
Example: If your safe speed is 40 mph, apply the brakes once your vehicle speed reaches 40 mph. Your brakes should be applied hard enough to reduce your speed to 35 mph. Once you vehicle speed reaches 35 mph, release your brakes. Repeat procedures as often as necessary until you have reached the end of the downgrade. This braking technique is called snubbing.		
b. When operating any vehicle, do not ride the clutch, race the engine, change gears, or coast while driving down grades. At the bottom of the grade, be sure to cancel 4-way emergency flashers.		
NOTE: Not all test routes will contain an area of sufficient grade to test your skills adequately. Therefore, you may be asked to simulate (verbally) driving up and down a steep hill. You must be familiar with the upgrade/downgrade procedures so that you can explain and/or demonstrate them to the examiner.		
22. Before reaching a railroad crossing--		
a. Decelerate, brake smoothly, and shift gears as necessary.		
b. Look and listen for the presence of trains.		
c. Check traffic in all directions.		
d. Do not stop, change gears, pass another vehicle, or change lanes while any part of your vehicle is in the crossing.		
e. If you are driving a bus, a school bus, or a vehicle displaying placards, observe the following procedures at every railroad crossing (unless the crossing is exempt):		
- As vehicle approaches a railroad crossing, activate the 4-way emergency flashers.		
- Stop the vehicle within 50 feet but not less than 15 feet from the nearest rail.		
- Listen and look in both directions along the track for an approaching train and for signals indicating the approach of a train. If operating a bus, you may be required to open the window and door before crossing tracks.		
- Keep hands on the steering wheel as the vehicle crosses the tracks.		
- Do not stop, change gears, or change lanes while any part of your vehicle is proceeding across the tracks.		
- Turn off 4-way emergency flashers after vehicle crosses the tracks.		
NOTE: Not all road test routes will have a railroad crossing. You may be asked to explain and demonstrate the proper railroad crossing procedures to the examiner at a simulated location.		

	GO	NO GO
23. After you have driven across a bridge or under an overpass, the examiner may require you to explain the posted weight limits, clearance, or height restrictions. If your test route does not have a bridge or overpass, you may be asked to explain other traffic signs on the route.		
24. During the driving test you must--		
a. Wear your safety belt.		
b. Obey all traffic signs, signals, and laws.		
c. Complete the test without an accident or moving violation.		
25. You will be scored on your total performance in the general driving behavior categories:		
a. Using your clutch correctly (manual transmission):		
- Always use clutch to shift.		
- Double-clutch if the vehicle is equipped with non-synchronized transmission.		
- Do not race or lug the engine.		
- Do not ride the clutch to control speed, coast with the clutch depressed, or pop the clutch.		
b. Using your gears correctly (for manual transmission):		
- Do not grind or clash gears.		
- Select gear that does not rev or lug engine.		
- Do not shift in turns and intersections.		
c. Using your brake correctly--		
- Do not ride or pump brake.		
- Do not brake harshly. Brake smoothly using steady pressure.		
d. Use your lane correctly--		
- Do not put vehicle over curbs, sidewalks, or lane markings.		
- Stop behind stop lines, crosswalks, or stop signs.		
- Complete turns in the proper lane on a multiple lane road (finish a left turn in the lane directly to the right of the center line). If there are multiple left turn lanes, always use the right-hand turn lane.		
- Finish a right turn in the right-most (curb) lane.		
- Move to or remain in right-most lane unless lane is blocked.		